GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2933
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2007
COAL GASIFICATION
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Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to promote coal gasification;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) to what extent such a technology is commercially viable;

(d) whether some foreign companies have sought permission to start their business in the country by using the technique of changing coal into oil;

(e) if so, the details of such proposals; and

(f) the level at which these proposals are being considered at present ?

Answer

MINISTER OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLIDEORA)

(a) Yes Sir,

(b) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd (ONGC) has signed an Agreement of Collaboration, (AOC) with Skochinsky Institute of Mining (SIM-NMRC), Moscow, Russia to develop Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) technology in India on 25th November, 2004. After studying eleven sites, one site namely Vastan Mine block belonging to Gujarat Industries Power Company Ltd., (GIPCL) in Surat Gujarat has been found most suitable for UCG.

(c) Commercial application of UCG technology has taken place only in erstwhile Soviet Union. A UCG based power plant station is still operative in Uzbekistan and is producing approx. 25 MW electricity. UCG is also being produced on pilot level in Australia and South Africa. The commercial viability of underground coal gasification in Indian condition could only be assessed after taking up pilot scale studies.

(d) to (f) In so far as Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas is concerned no approval has been given to any foreign company to start its business in the country by using the technique of changing coal into oil. However, foreign companies are free to collaborate with Indian companies in this regard.